



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

X2

G

9976

A

751,124



**LETTER**

TO THE RIGHT HON.

**VISCOUNT MILTON;**

BEING

**A REVIEW OF THE VARIOUS SOURCES  
OF NATIONAL WEALTH,**

AND

**A REPLY**

**TO THE RECENT PUBLICATION OF HIS LORDSHIP  
AGAINST THE**

**CORN LAWS.**

**BY GEO: WEBB HALL.**

**LONDON:**

**J. RIDGWAY, PICCADILLY.**

**1832.**

---

Printed by J. F. Cannell, Dale-street, Liverpool.

---

# LETTER

TO THE

RIGHT HON. VISCOUNT MILTON,

&c. &c.

---

MY LORD,—I am glad to perceive that you have laid your arguments for the repeal of the corn laws before the public, because I trust it may be the means of again directing national attention to this important subject, at a period of our history when, amongst other questions affecting the resources and prosperity of our country, this may be introduced again for legislative discussion.

Your publication, my Lord, is basking in the sunshine of popular favour, with, perhaps, a large proportion of the active members of our community; and the power of the press has been, with few exceptions, ever ready to support and recommend the views which you maintain. It may seem, therefore, an arduous task for a humble occupier of land to attempt to stem this current of opinion, arising from what is considered the immediate interest of the many, and constantly stimulated by those who wield a mighty engine to support these popular views.

B

It is of the utmost consequence at the present period, when a new era, in many points of view, may be opening upon us, to ascertain, how far the restrictions upon the importation of corn, which you thus deprecate, may affect the welfare of the several important interests which they involve; for if it be satisfactorily ascertained, that the general and permanent interests of the country can be best promoted by their repeal, the sooner that conviction spreads the better: but, on the other hand, if it can be made out, that in the circumstances in which we are placed, they are essential to the extensive interest which is primarily involved—that they tend to provide the best and least fluctuating supply of corn for the nation at large—that they do provide employment for thousands who would otherwise be precluded from earning their honest maintenance, by that pursuit alone which is practicable to their long-formed habits—then it is as desirable that such convictions should be made widely known, and that intelligence and influence should convince the country generally, that these internal bickerings amongst the common subjects of a great and enterprising country, are as injurious and ill judged, as they are unworthy of it.

It is because I am thus satisfied that the truth, to whichever side it may incline, will, if due investigation be allowed, make its way, and prevail, that I hail the appearance of your Lordship's pamphlet on the subject. If the arguments you advance are conclusive they ought to prevail; but if they embrace only partial views, however correct, the remainder of the great question has a fair and commanding claim, not only on your Lordship, but on all those who support and promulgate the views for legislation which you would advance.

Satisfied as I am that the opinions you have declared, and the arguments that support them, do not comprehend all the bearings of that great question on which depends much of the independence, the internal industry, and the prosperity of our coun-

try, I feel it a bounden duty thus publicly to impugn them, trusting that a desire for investigation, in many who may be called upon to judge respecting them, will lead individuals to seek and duly weigh the arguments that may be advanced on either side, divested of that extrinsic interest they may receive from the channel through which they flow.

It would not fall within the compass of a pamphlet to enter into much detail upon the leading principles which influence the creation of our wealth. That the means of still increasing it are largely possessed by this country there can be little doubt. Employment, or labour, as it may be originally called, is the foundation of wealth; and capital may be considered concentrated and accumulated labour, which can set industry in motion on more advantageous terms. These elements of prosperity are possessed by this country to a most liberal extent, but only in a degree are they actively operative to produce that good of which they are so fully capable. Capital lies dormant, or at least extensively inactive—much of the power of exertion which the country owns is comparatively uncalled for—the ability to consume is consequently extensively impaired, and this again tends to throw impediments in the way of renewed production.

Why is it, that with all the ingredients of prosperity within our power and our reach, so great a deficiency of it should be manifest, and so much suffering still be prevalent? An error must exist somewhere: and will it not be found, in part, in that unworthy jealousy still subsisting between the great, the intelligent interests of the state, known by the name of the productive classes. Each would endeavour to be the main spring of prosperity to the other, and the examination of their several claims to precedence will be a fit and fair subject of discussion in this address to your Lordship and the public.

The argument for the repeal of the corn laws rests upon the claim of the manufacturers to their being entitled to precedence,



and taking the leading station of importance in the realm. They promise, and your Lordship also for them, that they would then consume a greatly increased portion of the produce of the earth : they would traverse distant markets—they would undersell nation after nation—and they would bring the stores of other countries to remunerate the exports from our own.

It is readily granted that much of what is promised on this head would arise from making the export trade of this country it's leading interest, and taking in return the growth and productions of foreign states. Devoted as I feel to that great interest on which the employment, the peace, and the duration of our country so essentially depend—the agricultural interest—I estimate far higher the duty which each subject owes to our common country, regarded as a whole, nor will I, knowingly, advance an argument to support the one, which has not the prospect of contributing to the well being of the other. Readily, therefore, will I admit, the portion of good which would arise from an active interchange of commodities, fabricated in this country, and paid for by commodities imported from abroad. There are various ways of creating prosperity in countries, diversified in excellence, according to the circumstances in which they are situated; there are some cases when the mode detailed of exchanging manufactures for agricultural produce between two countries separated even by sea, but united in peace, may be the preferable, and should be the primary, direction of industry : but is such the case of England ? Under the most favoured supposition this is an investment of capital and industry which is dependent for it's duration, and even existence, upon the enactments of other countries—liable to all the derangements of their fashions and caprice, and at best presents only a segment of a circle, which must look elsewhere for a circle's strength.

It is fully admitted that there may be circumstances where the attention of the legislature should be mainly directed to the encouragement of that traffic which exchanges one portion of

it's own production for the production of some other country : and the principle may be extended still farther. Instances have been witnessed where the prosperity of a small country has depended very much upon the investment of capital in the supply of different nations with the various commodities they severally required ; the country itself subsisting, as it were, upon the reward of it's services to others, and participating only in a minor degree in the consumption of those goods which it was the means of transporting from one nation to another.

It is fully possible that a St. Helena in point of size, were it well stocked with capital, warehouses, and convenient quays, in a peculiarly advantageous locality, might carry on as long as these particular circumstances continued, an immensely surpassing quantum of trade to that of surrounding countries ; and a case of this kind is upon record, in the island of Malta, during the late war. But what is Malta now ? It's thronged and busy quays derived their existence from the singularity and central nature of the place ; and, in some degree, it's rocky barrenness was the cause of it's prosperity, by rendering it more inaccessible to attack. But the adventitious circumstances which raised this insignificant spot so far above it's natural level have passed away, and with them, all it's adventitious prosperity ; and the site, which for several years was the object of active competition and of unusual value, is now comparatively deserted, and far surpassed by many other places.

Nothing can be more evident than that these principles of prosperity derive their value essentially from the circumstances to which they are applied, and that a just adaptation of principles themselves correct, is fully as important as soundness in the views themselves. Manufacturing ingenuity and activity, and commercial enterprise, are, in themselves, highly beneficial and vastly important to the employment and prosperity of states ; but still they are not the foundation of their strength,

except in peculiar cases, and those, too, cases of comparatively precarious existence. They seldom make their appearance until the cultivation of the soil has made considerable progress, pioneered the way, and provided the materials for their establishment and fabrics. When established, however, it is cheerfully admitted that they speedily, extensively, and gratefully repay, the efforts which a country makes to put them forth. Like the branches of a tree, they not only adorn the trunk from which they rise, but return, with plenteous interest, the effort which is made to put them forth. When once developed, the manufactures of a state, and the branches of a tree, alike return to the united and common stock, nutriment and strength, which they derive independent of the source from whence they spring. But, if it be presumptuously supposed that either the one or the other can rest without the parent foundation ; and that any extrinsic aid which is injurious to the roots, which feed alike both trunk and branches, can be beneficial to things of secondary growth, speedy and sure decay will demonstrate the reverse. New branches can be put forth, and new manufactures may be established, if old ones are cut off and annihilated ; but this reproductive power resides not in the showy heads of trees, or the beautiful developments of manufacturing skill.

Nothing is more certain, than that agriculture and manufactures exist and depend upon the mutual interchange of commodities produced by each other, except that the former must precede the latter at the commencement, and at every subsequent stage of their mutual increase. It is the contravention of this principle in theory and in practice that is so strongly to be deprecated ; and it is so because it has such substantial ground work and experience on which to rest. As well might houses be elevated story after story, with projections based on nothing, without prejudice to a building's strength, as manufactures crowded on manufactures without a corresponding extension of agriculture to sustain them.

The moment the production of manufactured goods exceeds the consumption of a nation's population, that moment, to the extent of the surplus, and in that degree, does a nation become dependent upon others for a market for its goods. Doubtless, to a considerable extent, this surplus can exist, and this dependence can be felt, without any injurious tendency, as most countries are, to a certain extent, in a similar situation; and mutual desires for interchange, and varying wants and commodities, lead to mutual ties of interest and support. But although the varying productions of different states give a direct interest in parting with those commodities which they can spare, for others they do not possess, yet if this principle be carried beyond its just and necessary limits, it not only loses its beneficial character, but assumes a baneful tendency, because it then may interfere with the employment of industry in either country, which is already carrying on a just and equitable interchange of commodities, under circumstances of legislation common to both. It is at this point of interference that the watchful eye of a parental government should interpose, and with judicious care prevent the fair and internal exchanges of a country's produce from being disturbed by circumstances which have no direct relation to the basis of such exchange. No advantage can arise from these being disturbed. At this point commences that substitution of customers which carries distress into one class, to recoil upon others, which has been so frequently witnessed in our own country; and at this point begins a direct and unjust preference to an export and foreign trade. When a foreign trade is carried on to diminish, and to more than moderate a similar one at home, no real advantage can accrue. Changes that inflict extensive misery must take place, and no real increase of the aggregate of trade can be the result. If the grower of corn in this country be superseded in a degree by import from abroad, his production or his price must be less, and his power of exchanging for

manufactured goods must, precisely to that extent, be diminished also. To this extent the aggregate books of the manufacturing interest must testify a loss and abridgment of customers. Admit the full claim to benefit from custom produced by corn received from abroad, although it is perhaps paid for only in a round-about and inconvenient way, through a distant nation furnishing the material of our circulation, which, in the mean time, may have been inconveniently disturbed—and you then obtain benefit of new customers from the corn-exporting country, less loss of custom from displaced or worse paid growers of corn at home—balance, if any, alone to credit.

To show that this process of reasoning is not delusive, let it be considered that the power which the cultivator of the soil possesses to raise funds with which to deal with his manufacturing brother, is far less under his own control than the produce which active and intelligent exertion, under the blessing of a bounteous Providence, may secure in his labours from the field. Farther than he has funds he has no power to expend. To this extent he is as willing as he is able; and precisely at that scale at which he receives payment is he ready to pay for the manufactured goods which he receives from the manufacturer of his own country, and from him in preference.

It is only when the interfering medium of an export trade captivates the short-sighted observation of a kaleidoscope observer, that the scale of prices mutually paid to each other by the inhabitants of the same country becomes important. Severed from this connexion and the ratio it bears to the taxes of the country, *which is important*, what import is it whether the prices, which are the medium of barter between uniform customers in the same country, be nominally high or low? Would their industry be less; their power of consumption impaired; or their workmen less amply provided for, under a system of internal high prices, than under a contrary one? Certainly not. But under the existing fixed charges of the state, both are interested in having the prices high.

The mistake consists in not placing *a well balanced industry* in the commanding situation of importance, to which it is so justly entitled : a well employed population, ministering to each other's wants, and this cannot be the case except pursuits are equally balanced and encouraged, must be a thriving one, whether their medium of traffic or exchange be leather or diamonds.

Industry is the real source of wealth, therefore, encourage industry. Money is merely a commodity, less valuable for most purposes than many other commodities, but from it's scarcity it is a convenient instrument of exchange : if, however, this useful medium of traffic delude the sight, and throw a doubt over the value of constant employment, as far as any nation can control the means of securing it—if it tend to mystify the simplest principles of common sense, which with many it is to be feared it does—then the balance of evil, which may be attributable to it, will be borne witness to by a long catalogue of idleness, misery, and crime.

What gives the amazing strength possessed by the well compacted wheel or the overhanging arch ? Their power consists in the indissoluble and friendly union of their several parts. Break through in any place by fraud or force—let one portion only prove unsound, or become disaffected to the rest, and at once their power is lost. United, and adhering at every joint, not only will they bear the rude shocks to which they may be exposed, but much extrinsic weight may be supported by and built upon them to add to their utility, and it will be borne with ease. But a compacted base is indispensable to secure the duration of any work to be erected on it ; and an extensive and well united industry at home, not exposed to the vicissitudes of more distant traffic, is essential to support that very foreign trade which some would heedlessly or interestedly, as far as individuals are concerned, attempt to extend at the nation's cost.

It is highly desirable that the home and foreign trade should be considered as resting on distinct and separate grounds : the

latter is too fully known to be dependent on the keenest competition, and is compressed into the narrowest compass by foreign rivalry. Why should not a better understanding ever subsist between the nearer relations of the same country; and why should not they make those allowances for mutual difficulties, which their numerous interests in common may so naturally claim? Shall their several employments and mutual dealings be superseded only for a foreign traffic?

Under any circumstances, that portion of manufactured goods which is paid for by an exchange for home commodities, in a country where the goods supplied are readily taken at whatever they may cost, must be the most valuable: surely, then, when the amount of this mutual traffic forms so large a proportion of the whole, as it does in England, is it worthy of every encouragement and protection.

The export trade of this country is, probably, not one-fourth of the aggregate amount of our national industry; the supply of grain derived from abroad has seldom amounted to a month's consumption, and the large remainder which is left to be classed under the head of British industry, shows, most distinctly, how much the means of independence and of prosperity are inherent and attached to this favoured land, and the various resources which it comprehends.

With what pretensions then can those engaged in the export trade, or those who advocate their immediate interests, ask of the legislature appointed to preserve the general good, any alteration of laws that are conducive to the well being of the major portion of their countrymen? They cannot directly do so; but they still ask for their desired end to be accomplished, by attempting to show that the country generally is similarly interested with themselves, and that their export trade, which they rank so highly, cannot be extended by any other means. The immediate and the permanent interest of individuals is as frequently various in the business of life, as it is in the moral

progress of mankind ; and it is this immediate and fancied interest that is so assiduously attempted to be enlisted against the corn laws. It by no means follows, that when the export trade cannot be increased by any other means, that it is to be increased by these : if there be truth in the foregoing pages, it has been shown that export of goods, produced by import of corn not required by the wants of this country, and inflicting injury on the native grower of corn, can never increase the aggregate quantity of goods sold—although it may change an English customer for a foreign one.

There are many reasons for not changing the direction of industry, by giving greater encouragement to an export trade at the expense of other classes. It has been shown to be more precarious in it's duration, more fluctuating in it's progress, and it is less beneficial in it's immediate operation, as far as the employment of labour is concerned, compared with the double investment of agriculture and manufactures, mutually exchanging with each other in the same land, contributing to the same taxes, supporting the subjects of the same realm in active industry, and thereby preserving them from the degradation and demoralization which have been too painfully and extensively witnessed for several years past.

This country has plenty of capital—an abundance of labourers—and an ample field for the employment of both, upon her own soil, if her active and enterprising sons will value the opportunity as they ought—and with moderate views of almost certain success, commence and confide generally in the salutary work.

What will other nations do for us ? Will they take a portion of our national debt ? Will they contribute to our poor rates ? Or will they set to work in foreign husbandry the labourers superseded by want of outlay in the agriculture of this ? They will do none of these : then why should they have our markets thrown open to them, for commodities which are fully congenial to our country's growth ? It may be answered,



that the benefit will accrue to this country as well as to foreign states. But after all that has been written to show that the rise of wages is the fall of profits ; and that corn at a higher price, causing higher wages, will contribute to that fall ; it has not been attempted to be maintained, that two investments of capital here, at a lower rate of profit than abroad, may not far exceed the one investment here, at a higher rate of profit, trafficking with a similar one in a foreign state. Surely, as far as this country is concerned, the two smaller returns, if they sink not to half, must be more productive than the larger ratio of profit divided between two countries that partake the benefit ? Here it is that compensation is made in an advanced country for the diminution of the rate of profit and of interest which necessarily takes place there ; the increased quantity which has accumulated makes the annual increase on the whole far greater than it was in an earlier stage, although the rate of it's progression has become less. Shall a nation, however, become impatient in it's maturer growth, that it has not still the agility of a child, when it is fully possessed of the more important and powerful faculties of manhood ? Or will it expect that the tide of growth and increase in it's own particular case is to be kept up with full velocity, when the natural tide flows less and less rapidly, to fill the river's bed, as it approaches the completion of it's object ?

The efforts that are made, and the plans adopted, to escape from situations prescribed and appropriate, but not combining all the advantages of varying and different circumstances, are very frequently short sighted, dangerous, and absurd. The aspiring frog has been too long celebrated in fable not to recur to the imagination in cases of this kind ; and the idea of keeping up the ratio of profit in an old country, by emulating the youthful vigour of a young one, is equally absurd.

The author of the notable discovery, that profits must be kept up by keeping wages down, in looking steadfastly at one portion

of his subject, has manifestly overlooked the cost at which he would attain that end ; and following the not unfrequent practice of law-givers, on these subjects, he has omitted to take into the account the natural and incidental consequences that would arise from the mode he has himself proposed to attain his end. To keep the rate of profit up would be a valuable acquisition; but for it to be of any real service, it must not lessen the amount employed in doing so, or the discovery, so far from being salutary, must be decidedly erroneous : in curtailing the investment of capital, either by the importation of corn, or any other means, much injury is produced, and it is inflicted upon the most defenceless, and not least important portion of the community. The principle of making a high rate of profit a test of prosperity, is one that would keep a nation's territory, if not of the most fertile character, in a state of comparative barrenness ; and all the beneficial employment and all the active industry, which we have witnessed on our thus condemned and poorer soils, would have been undirected to their cultivation. The full and fancied supplies, which the fervid imagination of a dictator on the political economy of states may expect, perchance would not arrive : he had, perhaps, to learn, that the risks of inferior and deficient crops are very much enhanced by inferior cultivation ; and he might not be aware that history has demonstrated that the prices of corn were both lower and steadier, under a system of restriction and internal growth, than under the contrary practice.

He would open the ports to the whole world, and from the world at large could he be disappointed in receiving adequate supplies ? It has frequently been found that what is the duty of numbers, is less satisfactorily performed than where the work is undertaken by specific individuals, more especially, when the interests of all clash in competition to perform the same ; and an unrestricted and general supply of corn, from a variety of quarters, would, at the same time that it entirely un-

settled the home supply, be subject to all the variations and losses of superabundance and scarcity.

It is desirable and even requisite, to the full understanding of these important questions, to ascertain and establish a general plan of their several bearings on each other before it is attempted to enter into more direct detail to prove the correctness of any particular part, and if it be needful to perform this in the minor structure of a house, to bring the whole into one immediate view, still greater is the necessity of describing generally and bringing into a connected view the whole of those springs of wealth and prosperity which affect the varied interests of a great and populous community.

A due attention to the springs of employment in the country, and a due adjustment of the powers of industry in full, fair, and harmonious proportion, constitute the foundation of that prosperity to the whole which is so ardently desired by numbers who would seek it through various channels. A well-balanced industry, and employment rendered as permanent and secure as practicable, tend far more to the annual and aggregate welfare of a state, than those sudden and transient, if powerful, stimulants to trade which are sometimes witnessed, and which often leave greater distress behind them. For the vessel of the state to proceed steadily and swiftly, the several constituent parts of it must be adjusted in station and degree, and no partiality be shown to any particular portion. There will, too, be required occasionally, a different apportionment of the burden which it bears, and alterations which no foresight could anticipate to preserve this fairness, and to develop the resources for progression which it is capable of manifesting. This is, to a great extent, the duty of a government through it's various ramifications, from the legislative houses of parliament, to the executive branch of it which is the duty of a parish officer ; and however much the interference of governments has been decried, in reference to any connexion

with the business of the country—yet it may be strongly urged upon national attention, whether that protection and aid which it should supply to every loyal subject might not be justly, economically, and beneficially supplied to numbers in a somewhat earlier stage than it is compelled to proffer them. It is childish to suppose that a government should interfere alone in those branches of it's duty which fall with severity on the subjects of a realm ; that it should war with other nations ; that it should levy taxes for the payment of them on it's own ; that it should build gaols and poor-houses as receptacles for criminals and paupers, and yet take no steps to prevent the crime and poverty that stock these reservoirs of misery and vice. The object of a government should be, to accomplish the ends for which it is established by the best and most efficacious means ; and if these ends are to be obtained by an attention to the wants and situation of the people before they are precipitated by distress into the class of criminals, by an interference on the part of government which may be deemed unusual, yet will not the desirableness of the end sanction the wisdom of the means by which it is produced ?

That a government should enter into or undertake any branch of business which may be safely and satisfactorily left to the performance of it's subjects, is not for a moment pretended to be argued ; but that it shall silently and inactively survey thousands of them placed in circumstances that for a length of time preclude their earning that honest maintenance which is the best and surest defence against the crimes which the law forbids, and yet make no strenuous effort to improve those circumstances, lest it should be deemed interference, seems to be a species of reasoning against which every reflecting mind and every benevolent heart should loudly protest.

The adjusting of interests—the trimming, as it is called in navigation, of the vessel of the state—is practicable only by a government ; and surely this is one reason for which it exists.

If retrenchment and economy are duties of a government, what so fit to retrench and make scarce as the idle and the vicious of it's subjects; and what so efficacious to this end as providing them with employment, which is otherwise denied them, and thus make them valuable, instead of worse than useless, members of society?

As long as a government is influenced only by such motives as the foregoing, and as long as the labour which it furnishes has a tendency to open fresh channels of employment, so long must such a direction of the power and attention which has been described be unexceptionable and salutary.

In this way only can all the determinately vicious be ascertained and convicted. When a mode of escape is afforded to the unfortunate poor, by which they may emerge from idleness and it's attendant poverty, then can the indisposed to work, and the disposed to plunder be detected, and consigned to that punishment which the law awards them. But while this most important duty, the employment of the poor, is consigned solely to the limited ability and power of the parish overseer; while he has mainly to draw upon the scanty and still contracting funds of a particular interest, with which he is himself connected, and the expenditure of which he is interested to restrain; it never can be expected that the employment so needful to the welfare of the state and it's population will be fully provided, and those vigorous efforts put forth, which the variations of business, the introduction of machinery, or any other cause, may have loudly called for.

If at first sight it should appear that the arguments which have been just advanced have no immediate reference to the subject under discussion, further investigation may show that the supply of corn—from whence derived—and the interest and the employment of the population at large—are closely connected.

From what source then could a government, or associated individuals, anxious to promote the welfare of their poorer fel-

low subjects at such periods when distress abounds, obtain a field for useful industry? and with what prospects of success would it be attended? The unoccupied and unimproved land of this country can furnish it, and with a prospect of abundant success. In fact, a greater combination of advantages is not easily to be met with, than is presented by a direction of industry in the manner supposed. Were due confidence subsisting between the several classes of the state, the same effect would be produced in the accustomed channels of employment as in the unusual and more forced method which is now to be considered, and the effect will be very much the same in either case; more agricultural produce would be raised—agricultural labour would be exchanged for one portion of provisions thus supplied, and the remainder would be exchanged for manufactured goods, and be consumed by those who contribute to such manufacture.

A more mistaken view cannot well be adopted, than that which supposes the benefit of the corn laws to arise from keeping out foreign corn, and thereby limiting the quantity to enhance the price. Let it be supposed, that at the present time an amicable settlement of this question had been acquiesced in by all concerned, upon the basis of the existing laws, and that the supply of corn and the demand for it were now justly balanced; would not the extension of cultivation here by the unemployed labourers, whose want of labour we deplore, set in motion either by a government or individuals, upon even inferior soils, tend to increase the supply of corn—to provide the cultivators with a larger portion of food—and to furnish also a surplus, with which they could support a corresponding number of unemployed manufacturers, by an exchange of their goods to the mutual benefit? This is not only the true but the fair way of looking at the question of protection, at whatever degree it may be allowed. Let the general supply of the employed labourers, whether in agriculture or manufactures, and the mar-

kets for their goods remain precisely as they are—let the unemployed agricultural labourers be then set to work by the application of a portion of that capital of which the nation has plenty and to spare ; and the effect will be an immediate outlay by this class to provide the necessaries of life. This would invigorate trade in it's largest sense, to the extent of which it was capable, by a purchase from some quarter or other, foreign or domestic ; but the whole of this outlay, which must once be procured from some extraneous source, will be ready for repayment at the year's end, or at least will be easily left upon the cultivated spot at the expiration of a somewhat more extended term. A portion of this outlay would take place for food, and a portion for the manufactured fabrics which constitute conveniences and clothing, for it shall be supposed that the individuals in question commence their undertaking in the lowest state of destitution, and that they receive their aid in the shape of wages, payable weekly. Let it be supposed, that the labour thus bestowed by one family should provide produce for the sustenance of two, (the correctness of which shall hereafter be examined,) or enough to repay the money which might have been advanced through the period during which no payment had been made.

It is evident that, in this case, the half of the produce not required for the support of the labourer and his family would be set free to be exchanged, or bartered for the supply of his wants other than food, and might be met by a manufacturing artizan, whose labour was not previously required by the wants of the country. By this advance of sustenance to both the labourer and the artizan, until their labour could be brought out in an exchangeable state, both families would be relieved from a state of idleness, and become independent of any charge except interest on the money advanced throughout the year or longer period. This mode of stating the question has been adopted on purpose, to show more evidently at what point an individual becomes a

burden to the state, by his labour falling below the cost at which he is maintained, and it is hereafter to be enquired whether the inhabitants of this country have sunk to this zero point, at which they are a loss and no longer a benefit.

The land is the source of food, and food is the most pressing requirement of man ; but as food requires time in it's production, vigorous efforts cannot be made without resorting to the assistance of food previously produced and stored, on which to subsist until the labour of the year is utilised by a bounteous Providence and the soil. Were there no prospect of a beneficial exchange by the agricultural labourer growing double the produce which he needed, he would not thus devote his time, and half his exertion alone would be required for his own support. He could still subsist, and might employ the remaining portion of his labour in fabricating those rude materials which labour might collect, to supply his other wants. Such a want of division of labour, however, it is painful for minds prone to dwell on the benefits of society and civilization to contemplate ; but it is useful to recur to this more original state of things the more fully to trace, not only the dependence of man upon his fellow man, but the various classes of a state on their fellow classes, and from this to learn, that on their due degree and proportion to each other depend the well being of the whole.

It is the want of this feeling of mutual dependence, practically demonstrated, for it is not only theoretically admitted, but constantly loudly proclaimed, that we have at this time so much reason to deplore ; and it will be one great object of this address to your Lordship and the public, to show where these links of connexion have been broken, or their necessity denied.

Although it be sometimes needful thus to rise from cases individual to the whole, the sooner we can return from these ideal and supposititious cases to circumstances as they exist, the better ; and it will now be well to direct attention to agriculture and manufactures in the aggregate, as they exist in our



own country. It is almost difficult to say in which branch the greatest improvement has been made in the last fifty years : gigantic strides have been witnessed in each ; but the unassuming and wide spread improvements in the productions and face of the earth, placed as they are amidst the larger beauties of natural scenery, are less arresting to the observation than the collected and concentrated ingenuity and skill which are brought into the small focus of a single manufactory. They have advanced wonderfully and together ; they have been supported by, and they have fostered each other ; and for ever detested be the minds that would mar their friendly union. They have witnessed prosperity united ; they have had to bear the severe pressure of suffering and distress at the same time ; and the former has been called upon, not without effect, to contribute to alleviate the pressing wants which severe vicissitudes had introduced amongst the latter.

It is painful, with such connexion, to feel that a spirit of hostility, prompted, perhaps, by feelings which the advocates of manufactures deem correct, should be suffered to exist, and that the extent to which agriculture has spread should be considered prejudicial to the general interest. If it be so, viewed in it's wide and comprehensive bearings, let it be contracted : to show that it is not, but that the reverse is the case, is one great object of the present address.

The amazing introduction of machinery has given quite a new feature to the power of manufacturing industry ; it has, in effect, whether it has numerically or not, increased in a corresponding degree the number of manufacturers ; that power is in excess ; at least it cannot beneficially employ it's full portion of strength : *the balance of industry is uneven*. On the true solution of the question, how this shall be adjusted, depends the decision of the inquiry, whether the corn laws ought or ought not to be abolished. The balanced case of the individuals who were considered surplus labourers of the state may

be again useful in exemplification at the present time. Had the labour of the single artizan, from any cause, produced more goods than were required by the two families, and the exertions of the agricultural labourer, from any want of productiveness in the field of his labours, not been able to provide food for both, how should the balance of comfort and employment be restored, but by the artizan devoting a portion of his time and labour to the pursuit of agriculture? When this were done, the requirements of the two would be again provided for.

If the artizan had found any other family where he could have exchanged a smaller portion of manufactured goods for the accustomed quantity of agricultural produce, so as to indemnify himself for the loss of time which he incurred from increased distance in procuring it, then the balance of employment and of comfort would be retained, and a more distant commerce would be established. As long as this more distant barter was only sought to compensate the deficiency in the supply of the agricultural relative, no inconvenience would ensue: but, were it carried so far as to refuse to barter with him, except upon the same terms which existed when their relative powers were different, suffering must be felt by one; and could the more productive power not find vent for an increased portion of goods on the more advantageous terms, it would be the interest of that power to take it at the terms on which it could be rendered—for his goods would be otherwise useless.

If these terms were refused, the agricultural labourer would have to occupy every period he might be able to spare, in supplying, in an inferior manner, that deficiency of comfort with which his more powerful relative could so readily furnish him; for he must lessen his supplies of clothing or of food; and were there any duties in common to be performed, or had any debts in common been incurred, this powerful and vigorous relative must find that the stranger to whom he would transfer his dealings would not own them, and the relation could not, un-

dealt with, have time to perform them. These things, at least, would make the foreign traffic balance the wrong way. But further ; if the agricultural labourer, notwithstanding his slower and less ingenious habits, possessed the greater bodily strength, and with all that easiness of temper which is not unfrequently united to, if not characteristic of, an instinctive good nature, had undertaken to perform, in an early period of their history, when they were trafficking upon equal terms, an arduous and particular duty by himself alone, the benefit of which was fully participated in by both,—what should we say of the justice and gratitude of his active and wandering neighbour, if he expected this partial division of labour to be still continued when he refused to exchange the portion of goods he had to spare for any less portion of agricultural produce, although the result of an amount of labour fully equal in degree to that which had been at first supplied.

This analogy, which appears strictly just, might be carried on still farther. It might be shown that the increased power of the ingenious artizan depended entirely upon his meeting with individuals possessing the goods he himself wanted, and desirous of exchanging them for those which the artizan possessed. Without this, he must starve in utter helplessness, or give up his pursuit for that of his despised companion.

There is, however, one view of this individual traffic, which places in so strong a light the advantage of an exchange of the abundance of manufactured goods for articles produced by neither individual, that it should not be overlooked. When ingenuity or habit had enabled the artizan to produce goods so speedily, that he could more than supply himself with agricultural produce, either from his home or his foreign connexion, what additional comfort could he bestow upon their small community by exchanging them for commodities which neither possessed ? by doing this, and by dividing them in an exchange void of jealousy, as to the particular merits of either party—independence, stability, and comfort might be the lot of all.

What is there to cause different inferences from the foregoing, when the individual engaged in agriculture is placed to represent that pursuit—the artizan to represent the manufacturing and commercial interests—common duties the expenses of government—a common debt our national debt—and the particular labour taken exclusively by the stronger individual in the early period of their history, the tithes, poor and county rates, or that portion of them that are peculiar to the landed interest?

It is of no use to attempt to deny the fact, that in a country such as this, well supplied with coal, ingenuity, and machinery, and the materials for manufacture, and only to a limited extent with land of very superior quality—although possessing for the present ample stores of that degree which may impart happiness and support to millions more than we yet possess—there will be a constant tendency for the prices of manufactures to become less, and the prices of agricultural produce to become higher and higher. So far, however, from this being a reason why the manufacturing interest should be encouraged to persevere more and more, it is exactly the reverse. In proportion as a due supply can be obtained in less time, and with less exertion, by the aid of machinery, in that proportion do the consumers of manufactured goods want to be increased, and the producers lessened. Powerful as the manufacturing interest is in due extent and degree—commanding as is the situation from which it sometimes may survey the other classes of the state—it's prosperity, nay, it's very existence, depends upon the meeting with individuals desirous to take in exchange the productions of it's art. The manufacturers should never forget, and their countrymen, except in the times of their presumption, should never refer to, the prostrate condition in which they have been exhibited to the nation at large, when their very power of exertion and production had been the cause of their distress, and when the speed at which they had been proceeding was manifestly greater than their strength could bear.

The principle of compensation in the various tribes of animal life, is one of the most beautiful and interesting principles in nature; and it exists also, manifestly in the classes of society. If the manufacturing interest possesses powers which may sometimes render it aspiring, it is at others taught the strongest lessons of humility: the lofty and rapid growing poplar a gale of wind may shorten and destroy, while the greater strength of the more tardy oak resists the blast.

In the union of agriculture and manufactures consists a nation's strength: to move no faster than we can progress with safety is a nation's wisdom: commerce is mutually beneficial to both these great intrinsic interests of a state; it contributes to the supply of the one with some of the materials which it requires in its pursuits, and to both it brings with advantage the produce of other countries, not the sources of industry or the growth of this.

To the utmost verge to which this beneficial interchange of articles can be carried, without trenching on the employment of our countrymen, may we say, God speed; but who that looks at the interest of his country with that deep feeling of attachment which it may be hoped is still widely prevalent; who would commit these important trusts to vague and thoughtless chance?

By legislative design it may be well to open, in a slight degree, even the competition of other countries to stimulate the ingenuity and energies of this; and the classes or individuals who are not ready to answer to the call for improvement and exertion, let them suffer for their inaction. But to admit a desolating torrent is very far different from the effect of a soft and genial rain: the latter is stimulus that leads to future fertility; the former, although composed of the same fluid, causes barrenness and ruin.

The great supply of grain for the consumption of the whole country, for centuries, has come from our own soil, and it has

only been occasionally that five or six weeks' consumption in the year has been introduced by import from foreign states : the effect of this, however, when not required by deficiency in the supply produced at home, it is melancholy to retrace ; and the acknowledged ruin of thousands of industrious occupiers of land has testified it's devastating effects. But the evil stops not here ; the capital and custom of these individuals are first lost to the nation, and want of confidence in the stability of their pursuit pervades the remainder of the class : labour is scantily set to work—expenses of every kind are curtailed—and with a low price of produce received, a low price only can be paid for manufactured goods, either by the occupier of the soil, or those dependent on him. It is surprising that this latter consideration has not made a deeper impression on the minds of the manufacturers ; their agricultural brethren, generally, are disposed to receive the produce of their own country, at the fair price at which it can be fabricated ; they expect only similar consideration for themselves : but the manufacturers, from the ceaseless activity of their characters and their machinery, seem far more bent upon doing a great quantity of business, than doing a smaller portion well.

This renders the whole world the only limit to their desires for mercantile transactions, and to the whole world can the surplus of British manufactures be conveyed, beneficially, if the payments in return are articles which this country really requires : but, if the payments are such as at once to supersede the employments of numbers of our countrymen at home, and to convert them from happy, contented, and industrious labourers, to the miserable pauper or the more decided criminal, then the activity and ingenuity manifested by the artificer, and the enterprise of the merchant, have been in this instance misapplied, and the ill effects must speedily recoil to supersede the benefit which, in the first instance, might have been derived.

Admitting, for a moment only, that the desirableness of re-

ceiving a larger portion of corn from abroad might be established, the country would have to make a movement decidedly retrograde as this manœuvre was proceeding. As the foreign growth pours in, as it has been described to have done under the operation of the unwise law of extremes of 1815, the British growth must be necessarily abandoned, except the inhabitants of the realm could consume a much larger portion, without the means of earning it. The healthy stream of circulation in a country arises from the flowing spring of constant employment; it is fit that wages should be adjusted to the prices of provisions, but it is still more imperative that employment should be *regular*, to provide a maintenance for those dependent on their labour. Want of labour is an overthrow of their capital; high prices are at worst but a tax on their expenditure.

How are the labourers to be employed that would be superseded by the desertion of a large portion of the arable land of this country? Are they wanted in manufactures? Assuredly, they are not. The same fixed capital of machinery, and the same establishments, could produce a much larger quantum of goods were they required by a brisk demand; but would a brisk demand arise in consequence? Certainly not. Agricultural capital would have comparatively no field for exertion here, and without productive investment it would have no power of expenditure: the agricultural labourer has nothing to rely on but his labour, and without a field to employ it he too has nothing to expend. The immense bulk of artisans immediately connected with, and contributing to the culture of the soil, would also be superseded in a degree in their employment, and their ability to expend, and a contracting process would pervade the internal industry of the country, generally, and an expansive one be given to the places which were selected to balance the superseded agriculture and its dependencies of Great Britain.

The devastation of property which would thus be incurred, is not half described or concluded; with a large portion of the

land thrown out of cultivation the poor-rates of many places would eat up the remaining remuneration which would be received for tillage ; and ruin, geometrically increasing, would be the result. Whatever might be heartlessly advanced under a system different from our own, no legislator ought to lose sight of that principle of our laws, that every man can claim employment or maintenance from those who have the power of furnishing it. With this principle in the mind, what shall be said of the proposition that would take away the only means of employment, which is extensively available, and leave a mass of idle annuitants that must speedily eat like a canker into the very vitals of the country ! !

The agricultural interest might claim, with confidence and advantage, much greater security than they at present possess. In asking it they would seek no sinister purpose of unfair self-interest. Their pursuit, taking it for a short period, is perhaps precarious ; but, taking it for an average of years, and under that system of vigorous and enterprising cultivation, which a prospect of adequate reward alone can excite, it is trustworthy and grateful. Under a system of agricultural encouragement previous years of plenty would be stored to provide, as in the times of Pharaoh, for years of scarcity, and a reliance would be felt that competition could arise only from just and not unequal terms : labourers would be extensively set to work—a demand for capital would arise—banking accommodation, founded on confidence, would again, but in a moderate degree, be allowed—the wages of employment would instantly circulate through all the ramifications of the state, and the manufacturing interest would most assuredly receive their full proportion of an increased expenditure.

Let it be remembered also, that all this would be the work of hope of reward alone. For the first year, did we start with a good harvest, prices would be moderate—and all this exhilarating expenditure would take place without much enhancing the



prices of agricultural produce, for idle people must eat now whatever else they want : at the end of that period an increased growth would have been provided, in a great degree, by a better police over the soil for the arresting of weeds, the robbers of the earth,—and who shall say that increased supplies tend to enhance prices from whatever soil produced? ! Confidence alone would do much ; every employer of unprovided labour would, in effect, assist his fellow occupier by diminishing rates ; and the country would be receiving the benefit of at least £20. per annum on every man thus redeemed from vicious idleness.

Is it questioned that produce could be thus increased, with all the knowledge, the implements, the buildings, and establishments that have been acquired in the last thirty years, in connexion with the soil ? The improveable powers of the earth are by no means generally and fully known, or, at least developed. Land may be pointed out far surpassing in productiveness other of superior natural fertility ; and there is scarcely any, where the elevation is not too great, but what will more than repay the labour which may be expended upon it, or, at least, enable a labourer to provide himself and family with food, leaving a surplus sufficient to exchange for the comforts and conveniences of life.

Much has been said in the present day, in confidence and ignorance, about inferior soils. What are inferior soils ? The answer must be varied, and comprehend descriptions of land whose barrenness is attributable to very different reasons. In the first place, it is readily admitted that there are some situations which present such a degree of natural incapacity for the purposes of cultivation, as to render the attempt to till them unwise from the precariousness of the result to be anticipated, as well as from the want of remuneration which would accrue, were the produce to be obtained in a perfect state. Such is that land, the elevation of which renders the ripening of grain uncertain and imperfect, and that which may be exposed to the

devastation of sea and river floods. The quantity of this description, where the great agents of nature are opposed to human industry, is, however, when compared to the uncultivated parts of the country generally, very circumscribed. The ripening of grain, under good management, will be perfected at an elevation of six, or even seven hundred feet above the level of the sea; and in many spots, where floods and inroads of the sea take place, they might be restrained by an application of labour, and land of the finest quality, and in the warmest situation, might be restored to use. In the second place, it is acknowledged that there are other gradations of quality in soils, most of the circumstances and situations in which they are placed remaining apparently the same, which render their productiveness in tillage various, and the consequent value to the owner and occupier of them different. This difference, it is admitted, is the cause of rent, considered separate from the owner's property in buildings and other conveniences which have been placed, by an expenditure of capital, upon the land, and that the existence of rent implies poorer or less convenient land elsewhere. Extension of cultivation must have a tendency to enhance rents generally, if a demand for produce has caused the cultivation of less eligible land; it is said it must have a tendency, for were the land cultivated by a government for the sake of employment—by individuals associated without a view to profit—by the overseers of the poor to diminish parish-rates, or the like, it would have a contrary tendency, by creating a forced supply to be placed in competition with that already grown. Such an eleemosynary cultivation, however, would have a similar effect upon the previous growers of produce, as an importation of foreign corn from places that can afford it for a less amount than here, and create distress amongst them if rents were not reduced; and as it is not desirable that such cultivation should take place to any extent, it is needless to pursue this mode of production further.

This tendency of an increased cultivation to call for an enhancement of rent, may be almost said to be the bane of agriculture, and to it may be attributed much of the distress which it has endured. To this, in a great measure, is owing the prejudice which is manifested by the manufacturing interest to the extension of that labour in cultivation which is the surest mode of setting their own industry in more rapid motion. The jealousy that is felt by the manufacturers against the landed interest, is directed far more against the owners than the occupiers of land. Your Lordship's address is directed to them; and yet the occupiers of land are the owners of all the agricultural produce of the state, and as such, are the immediate sufferers by the hostility which is manifested against the owners of the soil. It will be endeavoured to separate the conclusions which are drawn from the necessary connexion between the extension of cultivation and the increase of rent; to show that if one be injurious to the country, the other is in the highest degree important and beneficial; and happy shall I indeed be, if the humble, but anxious and earnest exertions, which your lordship's address has brought before the public, may contribute to place the bearings of these great, but distinct, though united interests, in a more plain and evident position than they have yet been laid before the industrious classes of the state. Give me the cultivation of the country—let our own land be extensively cultivated, and our labourers universally employed upon it—and I am satisfied that the result will be a plenteous and a rich reward for industry and care. The rent which will be the consequence of this wide-spread cultivation, if considered in excess, and unduly increased by that direction and encouragement of capital to a most important pursuit, may fairly be the object of a tax, which would fall upon the landlords, and on them alone; but it is indeed neglecting the dictates of wisdom to lose all the manifold advantages of an extensive cultivation, because a portion of the benefit under the existing laws would accrue to the owners of the soil.

In no other way can our agricultural labourers be employed than on the soil they were born to till. Should any increased demand arise for our manufactured goods beyond that portion which must be superseded by a neglected agriculture at home; the existing machinery and the hands that guide it can provide a greatly increased supply; the habits, too, of the husbandman ill prepare him for becoming, in the maturity of life, a manufacturer or artizan, and it is preposterous to suppose he could succeed as such. He would be transferred to the parish-rates; and in what way could the parish overseer, in the most efficient discharge of his duty, so well apply his labour even in a less eligible and effective form, as to that neglected agriculture from which he had been forced?

To drive the industrious labourer by any measures from his humble home of frugal comfort, and pauperize and demoralize him at the same time, is, indeed, to tear up the very foundations of security and of society: and the fiery ordeal which the country has lately witnessed, and which might be traced, with few exceptions, through those counties where the labourers were treated as parish stock, too evidently shows the evils that arise from inadequate employment and a degraded state.

Were the foreign trade of this country, however, to be allowed to supersede, in a degree, the old and substantial interests which have so long contributed to its stability and strength, in taking the leading situation, it would have to take the peculiar burdens which were placed upon the land when the existence of the former was comparatively unknown, and this again would take away from anticipated advantages.

But to return again more immediately to the investigation of inferior soils, from which the important subjects of rent, and that all-pervading benefit, employment, had in their incidental appearance led away. Variation in the quality of soils to a considerable extent, must be admitted by those who are really conversant with the capabilities of land; but after making ample

allowance for original fertility, much, very much, of the inferiority that may be witnessed in the amount of agricultural produce, arises from causes fully under the control of the occupier of the land. Nothing tends more to lessen the produce of the land, than insecurity in the prospect of obtaining a reward for the labour applied. It is "reward that sweetens labour," and the experience of the last thirty years amply evidenced how much inferiority of soil disappeared before the strenuous exertion that was applied to it. In times of agricultural uncertainty and distress, the tenant not unfrequently leans upon the land, instead of supporting it at its proper standard, by a just and annual outlay. This is in effect breaking in upon principal and applying it to expenditure, and deterioration must be the necessary consequence ; but where this does not take place, and where judicious management is pursued, inferior soils, abused and libelled as they are, have a tendency to *improve* and to lose that hateful name. It is not because a soil is once inferior that it is always to continue so : called into cultivation by a patriotic, a confiding, and a benevolent feeling, a soil of comparatively limited powers of production will furnish an extensive field for labour ; that labour will improve it ; and by a continuance of generous treatment it will rise to steps above it. The profit arising from the first culture of unproductive soils is no fair test of their ultimate return : so great, however, is the benefit arising from their culture, in the ample field for labour which they furnish,—and at the present time what can they furnish more valuable and important?—that they are surely entitled, during the first period of their culture, to all the exemptions from taxation which a government can fairly allow ; the exemption from tithes for the first seven years, has alone afforded facility to cultivation, which otherwise might never have taken place.

The returns of capital invested in arduous undertakings, whether they be the reclaiming of land, the cutting of a canal,

or many other highly useful works, are frequently spread over a long period of years. At first they may be unpromising as to profit, although the utility of the work is still unquestioned. Some are even ruinous to the projectors, and yet are highly lucrative to their next successors; while some, like the Duke of Bridgewater's canal, rise at last superior to the mists which had so long obscured them, and repay with enormous interest, enterprise, energy, and perseverance. But if we are to stop at the threshold of improvement, because we are told the cost of cultivating an inferior soil it cannot at the time repay—and are not to cast our bread upon the waters, because it may be many days before it can return unto us—then will some of the first and noblest principles of our nature be restrained, and much of that spirit of improvement, which has been displayed, would have been unknown. Without somewhat of this trust and forbearance of immediate profit, would even the human race be reared from infancy to manhood? What a helpless and inferior being is an unprotected infant! what care, what anxiety, and what expense are requisite to bring it to maturity, and to develop all its powers!—most, however, are capable, if their lives are spared, to repay in kind this long continued cost of affectionate devotedness which had been lavished on them: how short-sighted then are those modes of estimation that rest, even as it regards profit, upon the present moment only. The principle of progressive improvement, in inferior soils, appears never to have been contemplated by many, whose fluency, in the expression of the words, comprehends the largest portion of their knowledge respecting them.

The ability to raise agricultural produce at a low rate, which is possessed by other countries in a greater ratio than our own, is no great test of inferiority while we are still far within the line of unproductive barrenness—while an individual is still able upon millions of acres of our uncultivated soils, and millions more of our unimproved ones, to produce, by his exertions,

adequate supplies for his family and himself, with surplus to exchange for the clothing and conveniences of life, and to do much more than this, let us not be told that our own soil is not worth cultivating, and that the produce of another country, which is to smite with partial barrenness our own, can give us compensation in the deed.

Cheapness of provisions is an advantage which an infant state in the possession of much fertile land can readily possess ; it is an advantage the earliest acquired and the soonest lost : wages are at the same time generally very high, but civilization, and many of the blessings of life, are deplorably absent. A higher price for the supplies of food is the natural attendant of a more advanced natural growth, but employment is of still greater importance here, as the reward of labour, from the denser population of an older state, is seldom more than to command the necessaries of life. The remuneration for employment must follow nearly, and cannot long sink below, the price of provisions ; and, therefore, the price of food is less important to the labouring classes than employment, which is, in fact, their only property and support.

Improvements in agriculture have still a powerful influence in retarding the rise of the price of provisions ; which rise is not desirable on it's own account, but is a contingency far less onerous or injurious, than the inevitable consequences which must ensue from attempting to preserve a dense population in employment and strength, without an extensive agricultural foundation. These improvements, however, are frequently attended with a degree of risk and uncertainty before they are established, and therefore a degraded state of the pursuit, when every effort is needed to provide for imperative engagements, is very unfavourable to the development of those new springs of increased production, whose tendency is still to economize and reduce the price of the necessaries of life.

The positive or actual cost of producing food, in this or any

other country, is one thing; and it's relative cost to different land, in the same or a foreign nation, is another: while the actual cost of raising agricultural produce, estimated by the maintenance of labourers and their families, does not exceed that maintenance or the supply of all their wants; such cultivation is at least no loss to the country,—if it tend to ameliorate the land it is a gain, it is a very extensive good. But, even should less pecuniary profit be obtained from this, unassisted, than from some other sources, is the employment thus given to thousands of families of a British peasantry, nothing? Is the feeling of independence from the countries by which we are surrounded in the first articles of life, nothing? Is the demand thus created for every article of British manufacture, nothing? Is the field thus opened for the investment of British capital at home, nothing? Is the relief which our poor-rates can alone receive from such a course as this, nothing? And lastly—Is the satisfaction of beholding our native country clothed with crops and vegetation to the highest limit at which skill-directing industry can bring them to perfection, our every enclosure tenanted by the various descriptions of animals to which they are adapted; while the more barren spots and higher hills are devoted still to vegetable growth in hardy groves of trees,—is this a scene which any patriotic mind can estimate at nothing? Is not a great country such as this, which has regularly advanced for centuries in it's productive resources, and although at this time encumbered with a heavy weight upon it's national industry, still possessing an elasticity and enterprise for future progression which is seldom long repressed—one which has accumulated a fortune, or rather should we say a stock of capital, by it's own exertion? Shall such a nation as this be influenced in it's maturer and more powerful state by motives pecuniary alone, and from this ignoble reason, consign to barrenness a portion of it's soil; to idleness, pauperism, or emigration, a portion of it's people; to foreign states the capital of it's subjects; it's innate love of in-



dependence to oblivion : while an individual, under similar circumstances, rarely fails to beautify and improve his own domain, to diffuse employment, comfort, and cheerfulness to his own neighbourhood, and thereby deserve and lay down the most durable foundation for solid greatness and enjoyment ?

The proverb, that "Fortune favours the brave," is not altogether devoid of truth ; and that industry produces it's own reward, although, perhaps, in a different way from that anticipated, is proved in more substantial ways than by the fable, where a field was described to be dug to find a treasure. Do the discourses on inferior soils know that a bounteous Providence has provided a plant which under that cultivation, which in their wisdom they would forbid, has the power of transforming some of the poorest soils, in some of the least attractive situations, and eliciting from these productiveness equal to some of the richest natural pastures in the kingdom ? Can they be aware that, when this beautiful plant\* is by cultivation and industry once established, it will endure for years with little requirement of labour, afford abundant provision of the most nutritious quality, and be the means of providing a basis for the production of succeeding crops ? Are they informed, or are they still in ignorance, that a very large proportion of our supplies of corn are at this time derived from soils, which not a century ago were in a state of natural unproductiveness ; that as far as produce goes, they rival much of the richest land we have ; and, although the surplus for the landlord is not so great, the provision of employment and of wages is much more liberal from them. There are times too when these soils, like other things which are neglected and despised, have their peculiar value, and rise in importance above those which generally have an advantage over them ? Much of the land that is called inferior is situated at a considerable elevation, and in a season of unusual wetness these soils derive more than compensation from their

---

\* Sainfoin.

position, and frequently become of the greatest value. Were all our supplies derived only from one description of soil—did not the clay sometimes feed the sand, and the sandy soils return the like supplies to the clay—seasons which even a political calculator with his cycles and reveries can neither foretell nor control would occur, to carry famine, devastation, and ruin over the face of our once fair country.

Shall all these advantages, which are placed by a bounteous Providence before us in variety and diversity, in our favoured climate, be disregarded by individuals emulous of the title of political economists, and like children shall we choose the plaything that is most richly gilded? Shall the destinies of a great nation be swayed? Shall the welfare of thousands be entrusted and devoted to the dicta of book politicians, who might not know an inferior soil or plant were they to see one, much less the varied modes of extracting from them food, employment, and happiness? We are come to that period of our history when, I believe, correct principles, fairly and fully laid before the public, will command a just decision. On no other principle do I anticipate a favourable decision for the interest I am now defending. Its advocates are, however, not numerous, and if their convictions are strong their movements are but slow, and inaction on their part, is met by ceaseless activity on the part of those who differ from them, and who direct their efforts to principles of human nature which with many yield a ready response.

In advocating thus the employment of British labourers, with British capital, on a British soil, to raise supplies for national consumption at the lowest price at which it can be honestly grown, to the full extent at which it can be produced without incurring a loss from the labourers not maintaining themselves upon it, it is by no means needful that the greater cost incurred upon the most laborious soils, and the consequent enhancement of price required to render their cultivation profitable should pervade the whole amount of produce raised throughout the

country. This it is that has so horror struck many individuals in contemplating the effect of extensive cultivation. It has been already intimated that a tax on rent might fairly be resorted to, to equalize in some degree the benefit which would accrue to the more favoured soils, by extending cultivation which was encouraged for the benefit it would itself render, but which had imparted benefit incidentally to such soils ; and it was also stated that land of inferior quality, requiring as it does so large a proportion of labour to render it productive, is a peculiarly valuable acquisition to a thickly populated country, and may fairly be assisted and encouraged by exemptions from taxation which is borne by other soils. Stimulated by countenance such as this, cultivation, followed by growing fertility, would extend itself, and a *natural plenty*, produced from within, would pervade and benefit all the classes of a united empire.

To designate the corn laws as intended to create an artificial scarcity of the first necessities of life, is a description of their character highly injurious and unjust ; their legitimate object is to secure and extend our home supply ; and who shall say that a partiality to that source which has so frequently produced fifty weeks' consumption out of the fifty two, is an injudicious preference ?

Were the cultivation of the country already carried to an extreme verge—were the prices of grain exorbitant—did the cost of manufactured goods become onerous in consequence in carrying on any desirable commercial intercourse for goods required or essential to the wants of the country, there might be reason for grave consideration how far such high price of corn might be properly borne. But when it is indisputable that this country could, if called upon to do so, double it's present growth of grain—that the prices are now, compared with periods long since past, very little advanced, and certainly not equal to the difference of taxation at the respective periods—that the prices of manufactured goods are so much reduced, and are in fact so

low, that they have insinuated themselves into all quarters of the world, where they are admissible or desired by the governments or people; there, surely, is not a pretence for sacrificing the agriculture of this country, and its wide spread dependent interests, for the extension of one, which is powerful enough without such a destructive course, and which is itself deeply interested in the welfare of the former. I think it has been shown that, as far as profit is concerned, the mutual interest of the agricultural and manufacturing classes requires that cultivation should be carried on to a very great extent over lands of inferior fertility; and it is very questionable whether in a country where, under the operation of poor-rates, and they are not here condemned, the population can demand employment or subsistence, a regard to profit alone would not press cultivation beyond that zero point at which an individual became unable wholly to provide his own subsistence: where this arose from the infirmity of a labourer, the soil ought not to bear the reproach. It will be attempted presently, however, to show that this extensive cultivation of the land may be fully expedient and justifiable, even should the actual and direct profit to be procured from doing so, fall short of that to be obtained by a different direction of industry; but before doing this it is intended to adduce some examples in support of the principles of productiveness, already laid down.

A government colony has been established in the kingdom of Holland, somewhat exemplifying the mode which has been here recommended. It has been undertaken with the poor and destitute of the country, upon a soil the most inferior, and with a success which surely must be grateful even to the calculating head, and the sometimes unyielding heart, of a political economist. The land has been described of a character not superior to our Bagshot Heath, but improvement, fertility, and remuneration have been the result of encouragement, confidence, and industry. The moral effect produced has been not the

least valuable result of this establishment, which has been named Fredericks-oord, after the prince of the country which has fostered the undertaking.

It would be highly gratifying, were this the proper occasion, to pursue further into detail the foreign establishment which has been here alluded to ; but as this did not in any way contribute to give rise to the principles advanced in the present address, although it certainly, pleasingly, illustrates and supports them, another instance shall be adduced of wonderful improvement in the quality of land, still more grateful to a British heart, as it is within our native country, and is now exposed to the inspection of multiplied thousands from being situated adjoining that splendid work of enterprise and art, the Liverpool and Manchester Railway.

The improvement effected on Chat Moss, I have, myself, had the pleasure of witnessing, and can, therefore, bear adequate testimony to the powers of productiveness which lie buried in that, and numerous other immense tracts of at present useless land. The active and intelligent efforts of one individual,\* supported by others, had in 1830, extracted even from that barren and desolate bog, in the short period of three or four years, an amount of produce, equal in point of quantity or value to the very richest soil in the united kingdom, and of the positive value, in one year, of upwards of £30 per acre, which it immediately yielded.

This was the result of one crop alone ; others of a different character did present, however, at the date of two years removed from barrenness most inveterate, while untouched by the hand of enterprise and industry, an appearance equal to many, if not most of a similar kind, which a survey of two hundred miles at that time presented. Land of this kind, judiciously reclaimed, forms some of the most fertile spots which the country owns ; shall these not be rescued from that anathema of perpetual bar-

---

\* Mr. Reed.

renness, which an unsparing and illusory regard to interest most immediate and short-lived, if at first correct, would inflict upon it? The actual and immediate profit of such a judicious reclaiming of this portion of Chat Moss, in the now busy spot in which it is situated, cannot surely be questioned; and this may make it's way under such a system into cultivation, without asking those temporary concessions which places less favourably situated may require.

In advocating the claim upon the country at large, to receive the agricultural produce it can yield in exchange for other commodities, at the fair and honest, yet lowest price, at which it can be grown at home, I would ask that alone which would be most cheerfully granted in return to every other branch of industry in the state. In claiming from the country at large, the privilege of supplying their wants, as long as it could be done, with produce good in quality, and at a proportionate price, most readily would the whole supply of the agricultural interest be granted to the corresponding interests of our own country, for all those articles which they could themselves fabricate. Let British industry thus contribute to British ingenuity, and receive compensation from it, and the aggregate profit of the two transactions, mutually beneficial, will far surpass that high rate of profit, to aim at which our country, to an extent, would be made a howling desert.

“Live, and let live,” has long been the toast and motto of the agricultural class; but the individuals composing it have lived too little regardful of their peculiar interests, and they have suffered the activity of others to create a prejudice against them, which has been made, unworthily in many instances, an engine to lead to popular favour and elevation.

What can be more fallacious than the idea of a high rate of profit, which diminishes the amount of business in the country, contributing to the increase of national wealth!! And yet, this is the ground work on which the Ricardo race of politicians

have deprecated the extension of British agriculture!! I am not about to dispute the solid claims to attention which may be due to individuals of considerable, yet partial, and theoretic research. I will give credit to the full, for every thing they may have satisfactorily established; but I do protest against the judgment they have pronounced on the important question now before us, because it is a partial judgment—because they have summed up with very imperfect knowledge of the facts of the case—and have been ignorant of those principles of the pursuit they have denounced which are necessary to a correct judgment. Admitting all they assert to be true, they have not proved their case; what shall we say of the merchant who would look for the results of his profitable speculations in another man's ledger, as well as in his own? or the mathematician who would seek a lost angle in a different problem? and are these individuals one whit more fatuitous than those who would seek for the results of a profitable trade in other countries as well as in our own?!! Countries, too, that would contribute nothing to our higher and peculiar taxes—that might lay duties on the very food they send us as they have formerly done, and appeal to our necessities for the price they ask.

Is there a manufacturer or a mechanic that will underrate the value of independence? Is there one who is insensible altogether to the ties of natural relationship? And can any be found who would *deliberately* hand over this country to be provided by and dependent on other countries for a large portion of its food which must affect and influence all the remainder? It has been said, that even if the defence of agricultural protection should not be made good on the score of profit, there were numerous other pleas on which it might be supported. Employment, which no other pursuit can as adequately supply, stands first and foremost, even should it not return the whole advanced—independence—security—the improvement and beauty of the country—all of which can be afforded by an old and wealthy

state, and to which none should be insensible, press in succession on the attention. What is the life of an individual intent on nothing but himself and pecuniary accumulation, regardless of all the feelings, the decencies, and the comforts of civilization and society?—the man of accumulation only—and what is the fate and utility of the misapplier of resources in an opposite extreme? what is the benefit of these—compared with an expenditure removed alike from both extremes, and directed with judgment and liberality, first, to pursuits themselves productive, and tending to reproduce the power of doing good in continued succession; and, secondly, directing a portion of his resources to that advantage more immediate and more personal, which the springs of industry can well afford, and which are not without their use in stimulating industry in others by pointing out its attractive rewards. Shall an individual be considered justified and praiseworthy who devotes a portion of his resources to the ornament, or even the laying out of a garden not designed for production, otherwise than by its attractive flowers and walks; shall another encourage a taste for architecture, painting, or the arts at large, and shall the nation which comprehends the collected individuals who thus ornament and improve their portion, be debarred the luxury, the security, and the independence of at the same time contributing to its own supplies, and beautifying the country with industrious subjects and waving fields of corn? Many are totally ignorant, who, notwithstanding, hesitate not to give their opinions about the policy of growing corn at home—that the cessation of tillage upon much of our arable land would by no means tend to increase the supply of animal food, although it would so materially lessen the growth of corn.

Governments, however, have so generally interfered to scourge their subjects by an expenditure in the devastating fields of war, that any interference on their part, even for the most beneficial ends, is looked upon with distrust; but what



more justifiable, or generally salutary, or even profitable end, can be devised, the moment our finances will sanction the proceeding, than the improvement of the unproductive tracts of the national estate, either by advances or guarantee, and thus set industry in motion with it's various beneficial results ?

It is by securing various and regular channels of employment for the investment of capital, rather than by the magnitude of a few, that the national cable is to hold the people to the government : the more numerous the threads from which it is composed, the greater will be it's strength, and the more they are secured, the less tendency will there be for that transfer of capital to other countries, which is another of the bugbears of the present day. The freedom of our institutions renders it practically difficult to lay restraints upon the transfer of that capital to other countries which has been long protected in times of danger by the institutions of this, and some few individuals may endeavour to seek higher rates of profit elsewhere : they may do so, and endeavour to pick up fists full of nuts at a time, as described in the fable, and fail in the attempt of withdrawing them from the pitcher, from the covetous desire alone ; but these transmigrations are comparatively few : they apply chiefly to the merchant, who, it is said, is of no country—less to the manufacturer, who is so well provided here—and still less to the cultivator of the soil, who clings to his country and pursuit.

By a somewhat lower rate of profit here, some wandering spirits who hold their country light, and desire large gains may be lost, and not missed by it ; but by a want of attention to the general interest, and moderate views of the larger number, thousands of the best disposed, most attached, and enterprising subjects are forcibly expatriated from their native land, and is not this a severe national loss ?

Security, however, is the most attractive quality which capital seeks for, to tempt investment ; whatever, therefore, tends

to diminish that feeling, does more to drive capital away than any other proceeding. Confidence in a fair prospect of reward essentially contributes to the encouragement of industry, and thus it is that the products of agriculture in a market secured to the producers, may be proved from past history to be abundant in quantity, and regular and moderate in price.

This country, in trying to please every body, will please nobody, and lose much of it's credit, security, and employment into the bargain. It is no use to look to neighbours or friends, much less to rivals, to help us out of our national difficulties—but we should set to in real earnest ourselves, and true to ourselves, it can still and speedily be accomplished.

We have been kept in awe however from proceeding as we were wont to do, by a modern race of political economists, upon whom flashes of light or insight into these affairs have burst, and neither their disciples nor the nation have yet recovered from the deception of these Jack-o'lantern guides. Political economy, however, studied with that deep and patient attention which it's great importance to mankind and the intricacy of it's details so imperatively require and deserve, I am very far from wishing even for a moment to decry.

Correct political economy I consider the correct course for legislation; and it is doubly valuable when things prescribed, and the reasons for their being so, are alike beneficial and plain. It is because many of the class of would-be political economists jump at their conclusions without the necessary materials and means of forming sound judgment respecting them, that they become fit objects for satire and derision; while the unsparing and unfeeling mode in which they would consign thousands of individuals to destruction in pecuniary concerns, to accomplish one of their beneficial mutations of capital, or leave them almost to vice, and misery, with a faint hope of moral restraint, to redress misery still more intense—alike present

claims as little accordant to the best feelings of the heart, as the former do to the sanction of the mind.

It may not be useless to define a little the characteristics of this class, as already has been done with inferior soils. In contemplating the beautiful works of nature, the attentive mind cannot but be struck with the wonderful adaptation of means to ends, with a condescension and a care to accomplish the most minute requirements by adequate arrangements: no sweeping away, as unimportant, is observable here, but where part only of a quality is given, compensation in some other way is generally supplied: every thing has regard to proportion—and excellence consists very much in degree. It would be easy to extend very much instances to support these views: the best and by no means the shortest ways are taken to accomplish ends—rivers wind their circuitous ways to the sea, and indented shores supply the most valuable creeks and harbours. But a modern political economist, or rather a political equalizer, is the very reverse of all this. With that presumption which is the usual accompaniment of imperfect knowledge, he hesitates not to consign to expulsion from their native country, or to the most impracticable transmutations in it, thousands of a population who have long contributed to national welfare in a peculiar branch of industry, and to whom at least some portion of national recollection and gratitude is due, with a disregard of consequences as reckless as the investigations which led to them were precipitate. His principles are as unyielding as cast iron—his joints are stiff—his sight is near alone—like Proustes, he would stretch short things and cut off the longer, to suit them to his bed of torture; he has no idea that

“All nature’s difference keeps all nature’s peace;”

and he rushes to general conclusions and equalization, regardless of the individuals who unfortunately have been placed in his exterminating roads. To drive him back from his partial

views is hopeless—it is wiser to urge him on—for in learning's case,

“ If shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,  
 'Tis drinking largely sobers us again.”

The manufactures of this country have been indebted to a system of the highest protection for their rise and progress—it is now sometimes asserted, that they grew notwithstanding this encumbrance—as well might it be said that an infant was impeded by the fostering care of it's nurse, because the full-grown ingrate did not at that time require a nurse's care. The manufactures of the state are arrived at that degree of strength in almost each department that they have little now to fear from foreign rivalry ; did they, however, still require a high defence from foreign competition, *which until very lately they possessed in almost every article*, their agricultural brethren would readily give their assent to it's renewal, because they feel how needful it is to security and prosperity in their own case, and they would grant equal terms to others. They feel, too, that it would be as politic as it is just, to secure, by every means, the internal industry of the country, by a preference in those markets for it's several productions which are within it's own control ; a communion of interest and of traffic such as this, between the various classes of a state, is like the completeness of the human frame, diversified only by it's several parts—partaking altogether and alike of health or sickness—experiencing equally a circulation beneficial to, and pervading every the remotest part—and presenting an instance of strength and union within itself.

An export trade, on the other hand, is a shuttlecock traffic which requires inclination and ability combined in two parties to keep up and continue it : either has it in his power, at any time, to stop the whole proceeding, and risk and dependence are the chief characteristics of it.

I will now proceed to bring under a condensed view the seven-

ral principles of national advancement which have been attempted to be supported in the present address.

A well balanced industry at home ; that is, capital directed to agriculture and manufactures to the full extent of the country's capability and wants, by means of national encouragement or protection, in that degree so that each shall supply employment and commodities for the other, is considered the first and most important spring of national wealth.

Commercial intercourse, extensively contributing to the supply of those articles which are *foreign* to our growth, and causing an export of manufactured goods to make payment for them, is the next important auxiliary.

Employment for the people not absorbed by the usual channels of industry, to be regarded as a government duty, and as the least onerous mode of supporting those for whom the laws require support.

An earlier legislative regard to the prevention of crime, by the adoption of preventive measures—which would tend to lessen criminals and the expense they cause.

And lastly, attention to the reclaiming and even beautifying the several portions of our country, that present capabilities for improvement—by which a regard to their country's welfare may be excited and fostered in the people which it contains ; and a cordial union of *an employed and thickly peopled* nation, conduce to national strength and national felicity ! !

Having now, my Lord, enumerated many, if not most, of the principles that conduce to national employment and national wealth, and canvassed, I trust, with a spirit of fairness, the arguments that support or oppose them, allow me to make a few comments in detail upon the principles laid down in your book, which lead to conclusions so diametrically opposite. I cannot consider that you have by any means proved your case, even should the arguments you have advanced be fully borne out ; even then it would be a very partial view of a gigantic question ;

but I am satisfied that many of the conclusions drawn by your Lordship are in themselves untenable when brought to the test of a wider range of facts. The spirit in which your observations are presented to the landed interest cannot be impugned, although the decision of the question may, in a pecuniary point of view, be of much less importance to you than to most others.

In the first place, I must protest against your mode of stating the question, pages 2 and 3 of your address. It is very easy to combat positions manifestly false, but they may not be those which are really opposed to us. It is, assuredly, less beneficial to pay a high price for agricultural produce grown at home, than to receive the same produce from the same source at a lower price; although it may be, and is, more beneficial on the whole to receive British produce which provides employment here at a higher price than that which coming from abroad may furnish the same labour there for foreign benefit. I deny that the legitimate object of the corn laws is to raise the price of corn above it's natural level, or to raise the value of land. The true object of the corn laws is to prevent an inundation of foreign corn upon the occupiers of land, which would depress the price of grain below that price at which it can be fairly grown, and to shelter from a ruinous competition a class of men who have long invested capital in the soil, and who, *the tenantry alone, contributed to the property tax, in 1814, more than all the merchants and manufacturers of the state put together*,—to prevent the destruction of their pursuits and interests, and of those dependent on them.

Page 5.—The produce of land must be taken as a whole in the consideration of this question, just as the whole of the manufacturers of the state constitute one class or interest.

Page 6.—The higher price of corn, certainly, falls upon the entire community, whose prices should be and can be here accordant with it, whether in the prices of goods or the wages of labour; but without a price adequate to sustain it, agriculture,

this first-rate pursuit, could not exist even at its present extent.

Page 7.—The agricultural labourer is as much interested as any man in having corn low ; but without employment in cultivation here he would have no money to buy it. It would be then equally out of his reach, high or low : the parish would have to furnish it.

Page 9.—That a gradual and silent improvement of land, already in cultivation, should go on, however low the price of corn may be, is not more probable than that poor land should be cultivated under an inadequate price.

Pages 10, 11.—It is said that the ploughman is not, and the owner of the land alone can be ultimately benefited by the corn laws. The first and direct benefit accrues to those who have capital to invest in agriculture as a pursuit, and labour to offer for hire in the same calling ; the benefit accruing to the landowner is only consequent on extended cultivation, and may be moderated, if in excess, by a tax for the benefit of the state. It is true, that under restricted culture, a somewhat higher rate of profit might result from the best land, did not poor-rates eat it up : but the aggregate return of agricultural capital must be very much less, and competition for best farms also, would then be greater and still keep profits down.

Pages 12, 19.—The question, whether the labourer fares best with high or low priced corn is not conclusively settled by the arguments advanced. For these to decide, the *continuity* of employment ought to be established at each period ; now it was notorious, and admitted, page 13, that labour was very much in request at the dear period, and it is equally evident that it has been in times of cheapness very difficult to obtain employment. The weekly remuneration, at times of employment only, and in a few instances, is no test ; the surplus of the year, for the aggregate amount of labourers, might, and must be different. But the fact is, that in a fully peopled country, the wages of labour

can seldom vary much from that standard which is requisite to supply them with the necessaries of life, whatever the price of corn may be, more especially where provision for the poor is established by law. They suffer most from fluctuations, for alterations of wages do not immediately follow prices, and, perhaps, they rise less quickly than they fall.

Pages 19, 25.—A chorus might easily be raised to deprecate the corn bill of 1815—it's destructive effects upon nearly all classes, *from being a law of extremes*, was felt and pointed out by very many of the occupiers of land before it was repealed or modified by the law of 1822. It by no means follows, however, because this injudicious bill did not answer the intended end, that protection to agriculture is not needed by more regular and better means; the injury it inflicted is pourtrayed by your Lordship with judgment, and with feeling worthy imitation.

Pages 26, 27.—Admitting, for a moment, that a British supply of corn would, upon a period of years, be more expensive than a foreign one,—which history does not bear out, but the reverse,—the difference in price would, in the first instance, be a tax on the community, certainly; but such tax would be neutralized by most classes of the state, for the reasons already advanced, in the enhanced prices that could and would be paid to them for their several articles of exchange. This was strikingly manifested in the universality of risen prices between 1800 and 1813, although only partially attributable to this cause. Some few classes, such as the medical and legal professions, and the possessors of fixed incomes had not, perhaps, a direct equivalent, but an increase of business, consequent on national activity, was very near compensation to the former two. If this be correct, the other classes of the community have a set-off against the injury inflicted upon them by high prices, and the loss is accompanied by nearly full compensation; so that the result of the modern corn laws is not to confer only the fraction of a



